

CHISOLM (J. J.)

MISAPPLICATION

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OF

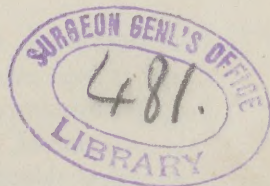
REMEDIES IN THE TREATMENT

OF

EYE DISEASES.

BY JULIAN J. CHISOLM, M. D.,

CLINICAL PROFESSOR OF EYE AND EAR DISEASES IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, AND SURGEON IN
CHARGE OF BALTIMORE EYE AND
EAR INSTITUTE.



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Among the cases which applied for treatment at the Baltimore Eye and Ear Institute, several exhibited in their previous history a mal-application of remedies worthy of record. One or two cases are selected in illustration.

Freezing the Lids as a Preparation for the Application of Caustic, in Granular Lids.—Mr. J., of Tennessee, aged thirty-five, consulted me for opaque cornea of such extent and degree as to offer no encouragement for treatment. At the time of the consultation there was no inflammatory trouble going on in either eye, but in each the cornea was so uniformly white as to completely conceal the colored portion of the iris within, rendering the definition of objects quite impossible. He gave

the following history: His previous disease was called by his attending physician granular lids. The disease was restricted to the inner face of the lid alone, and vision was good in each eye. The physician suggested the propriety of burning off the granulations with caustic, promising at the same time to use some local means of preventing pain during the cauterization. Nitric acid was the caustic selected, and to prepare the patient for its painless application the lids were everted and rigoline atomized upon them until they were completely frozen; then a thorough application of nitric acid was made. Intense agony was engendered by this treatment. The most violent and destructive inflammation at once set in, in both eyes. The final result of this congelation and cauterization of the inner face of the lids was complete opacity of both corneæ. When the lids became frightfully swollen, active measures were instituted to check the destructive course of the disease. Local remedies were assiduously applied in order to allay the pain; and when they failed to give relief they were speedily changed. These applications in their frequent mutations were sometimes of a very anomalous character. The climax was, however, reached, when a poultice was cut from the breast of a living chicken, and in its hot, bloody state, covered with feathers as nature had made it, was applied directly to the suffering organ.

Destroying an Injured Eye with Citric Acid to Stop the Progress of Sympathetic Ophthalmia.—Mr. C., aged thirty, of Mississippi, injured his right eye by the accidental discharge of a pistol. Although much inflammation was excited by the injury, the eye was not completely lost, a perception of light remaining when the pain and congestion disappeared. In the course of time, after six years, the sound eye commenced showing evidences of sympathetic irritation, which was so diagnosed by the attending physician. After successfully tracing the cause of trouble to the injured eye, he determined upon its removal, very properly, as the only means of insuring protection to the still comparatively sound organ. Instead of enucleating the eye-ball in accordance with the simple method laid down by

ophthalmic surgeons, he conceived the idea of causing the eye to slough out as a less risky method, and selected crystalized citric acid as the destructive agent. The lids being separated, the interpalpebral space was filled with the pulverized crystals. This application induced intense suffering, followed by severe inflammation which caused a sloughing of the cornea. When the swelling subsided the shrunken ball remained so persistently painful that, to secure relief from his constant suffering, he came to Baltimore. The removal of the injured eye under chloroform put a stop to the suffering, and removed all sympathetic irritation.

Blisters to the Soles of the Feet to Relieve Inflammation of the Eyes.—R. O., aged twenty-eight, of Montana, has been for some months a sufferer from catarrhal ophthalmia, accompanied with granular lids, which he reports as epidemic in the western country. His attack was severe from the beginning, and the case was treated by his physician actively. During the course of treatment, which extended over an interval of several weeks, among other remedies used were revulsives for the purpose of removing the inflammation to some distant and less vulnerable part of the body than the eye. A large seton was placed in the back of the neck, flanked in time by cantharidal plasters in each arm-pit. As the inflammatory trouble in the eyes did not yet yield to this persuasive course, a more distant point was taken for the action of the revulsive agent. The entire soles of the feet were covered with a vesicating ointment. The whole surface was blistered, which made his feet so very sore that he was confined to his bed for six weeks, being unable to support his weight upon the painful feet. This active treatment so disturbed his confidence in his medical attendant that as soon as he was able to travel, he undertook the long journey to Baltimore, where he came under my observation.

Oyster Poultices to Relieve Mucocoele.—Mrs. O. aged forty-five, of North Carolina, has had for the past twelve months a tumor at the inner corner of the eye, from which a muco-purulent

discharge is constantly escaping upon the surface of the eyeball, to her very great annoyance. The course of treatment pursued by her family physician consisted, according to her statement, chiefly in the application of poultices. Although no benefit followed upon their use, the propriety of the poulticing seems never to have been questioned, but their failure to cure was attributed rather to the selection of the articles employed. Having in the long course of treatment exhausted the best vegetable substances in ordinary use in poultice manufacture, the panacea was sought for in the animal kingdom; but even fat fresh oysters renewed frequently during the day failed to stop the muco-purulent discharge. When she came under my care, in Baltimore, the slitting of the puncture and the introduction of nasal probes soon effected the desired object.

Drawing the Teeth of a Child Sixteen Months Old to Cure an Inflammation of the Eyes.—Mrs. M., of Maryland, brought to me her child, sixteen months old, for treatment of her eyes. Upon inspection I found the disease phlyctenular ophthalmia of no great severity, a form of disease which yields very kindly to appropriate remedies. As such attacks of recurrent eye inflammation are not rare in certain children at the stage of teething, I suggested to the mother that the cutting of some of the large teeth might be the cause of the eye trouble. Automatically I found myself looking into the mouth of the child, when I was much surprised to find all the molars exposed, the gums red and thick over the canine teeth, but not a sign of an incisor tooth in the upper jaw. In remarking upon the very singular appearance which the mouth of the child presented, and the irregularity with which the teeth had apparently been developed, the mother informed me that the child a few days since had possessed the usual number of sound front teeth, but that all of them had been drawn out by the family physician, who had stated to her that although the teeth were sound, they were clearly the cause of the eye trouble, and that the eyes would never get well until the teeth were taken out. She yielded to his superior wisdom, and permitted him to extract

the four incisors. As no benefit accrued from this surgical operation, the mother sought the advice of an ophthalmic surgeon.

Gold Administered for the Cure of Muscular Asthenopia.—Mrs. G., aged twenty-eight, under treatment for debility, with fainting spells, complained also of weak vision, and on that account was brought to me by her attending physician. She was pale and sallow, although comparatively stout; she complained of fatigue upon the slightest exposure, with no appetite. Being a lady of wealth, her every-day luxurious living had become a monotony; she was debarred of her chief pleasure, reading, on account of pain in the eyes upon use. An examination soon located her trouble as accommodative asthenopia, indicating a tonic course of treatment with weak convex glasses; she informed me that she was now taking tonics from her attending physician, who being present gave me the following formula as the remedy which the patient had been for sometime using: **R**—Gold leaf (virgin gold) trituated with powdered white sugar until thoroughly divided, of which compound she took powders daily.

The following case will illustrate the condition of a large number of patients who come under the observation of ophthalmic surgeons:

Mr. T., of Maryland, aged fifty-one years, finding his eyesight growing very dim for near objects, consulted his family physician for professional advice; he was using 30-inch convex glasses, with which he could formerly read the finest print. Now they no longer served him to make out even the coarsest print. As month by month glided by his vision became more and more obscured. After a varied treatment with no good results, his physician informed him of the serious condition of his eyes, and the prospect finally of blindness from amaurosis, a disease of the optic nerves, which, in his case, seemed to be rapidly on the increase. He suggested active remedies for this most serious condition, and urged the immediate insertion of a large seton in the back of the neck, as an indispensable coun-

ter-irritant. This prospective surgical procedure alarmed the patient to such a degree that, with many forebodings of coming trouble, he came to Baltimore to consult a specialist. After a careful examination I found the patient's eyes perfectly healthy, but with marked presbyopia, as the result of age, in connection with a congenital shortening of the antero-posterior diameter of the eye-ball (a condition recognized as the cause of hyperopia or over-sighted, the reverse of near-sighted or elongated eyes. A 12-inch focus convex glass proved to him that with spectacles properly selected he still possessed all the acuteness of sight that nature had ever given him. Their application dispelled the horrible vision which had driven him from home and dissipated the dangerous amaurosis.

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